

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 7, 2012

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Governor presents Points of Light Award to Omaha youth volunteer organizer

Lincoln, Neb. – Ashley Spurlock, received the Governor's Points of Light youth award from Lt. Governor Sheehy and First Lady Sally Ganem today, at a ceremony in the Warner Chamber at the State Capitol. The awards are sponsored by ServeNebraska, Nebraska Volunteer Service Commission and presented quarterly in recognition of volunteers who give their time, talent and energy to help Nebraskans build stronger communities.

As a student at Skutt Catholic High School, Ashley volunteered over 700 hours and helped out over 40 different organizations. These included, Relay for Life, Stephen Center, The Salvation Army, Girl Scouts, Lakeside Hospital and most recently the Project Linus Chapter in Omaha, <http://www.omahaprojectlinus.org/>. Project Linus' mission statement is "To provide love, security, warmth and comfort to children who are seriously ill or traumatized" by donating handmade blankets and quilts to those children.

In October 2011, Ashley presented the Project Linus student volunteer project to the school's Student Advisory Board to request funds. Once the funding was approved, Ashley worked with a local fabric store to get the best price she could on material to make the funds go as far as possible. Through her planning, use of coupons and the Black Friday sale the day after Thanksgiving, she was able to purchase over 40 bolts of fleece to make tie blankets.

As a condition of getting a donation from the Student Advisory Board, Ashley had to coordinate volunteer work days for students to make the blankets. Ashley scheduled 8 different Saturdays through the end of January 2012 for her fellow students to volunteer to make blankets. Many of the students that volunteered were in need of service hours and were grateful for Ashley organizing such an opportunity to help out children in Omaha. 72 students put in over 160 hours of volunteer time to make 123 tie-blankets for Project Linus.

"Upon graduation in May 2012, Ashley was awarded the Skutt, Living the Gospel award, the top award for community service," said Kathy Beckman, Director of Guidance / Registrar, Skutt Catholic High School. "She definitely deserved the award because since Ashley has been a freshman she has done hundreds of hours of service each school year. She never was without a project she was working on or organizing others to become involved too."

To nominate individuals and groups for the Governor's Points of Light Awards who have made a difference through volunteerism and service, visit the ServeNebraska website at www.serve.nebraska.gov. The next nomination deadline is December 15, 2012.

ServeNebraska pursues its mission of mobilizing Nebraskans to strengthen their communities through volunteering, collaboration and national service programs.

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